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July 7, 2008

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: John F. Schunhoff, Ph.D.
Interim Director

SUBJECT: **BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON FORMER
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. – HARBOR HOSPITAL
MITIGATION AND EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE**

This is to provide your Board with background information on the issues raised in a recent news article about employee mitigation and discipline at the former Martin Luther King, Jr. Harbor – Hospital (MLK), as well as our current initiatives regarding staffing at the MLK Multi-services Ambulatory Care Center (MACC).

While portions of an electronic spreadsheet which contained summary information on discipline cases at MLK were recently found to be corrupted, the Department has complete records of all disciplinary actions taken against employees at MLK and every other Department of Health Services (DHS) facility through the hard copy personnel files. The Department also has complete records of the receiving locations where each MLK employee who was transferred as part of the mitigation process was placed. The information from the corrupted database it is being reconstructed through a manual review of each and every file, which is labor intensive but will be completed in the next two weeks.

The performance of all DHS employees is tracked through their personnel files, which follow employees to their new facilities if they transfer. These files include all previous performance evaluations and discipline records. Personnel records also follow employees who move to other County Departments.

Whenever clinical employees transfer from one DHS facility to another, they are subject to evaluation and competency testing by their new supervisor and facility. The employees are under the supervision of the receiving facility, where they receive annual performance evaluations and discipline where indicated. In accordance with this process, every clinical employee who transferred from MLK in the 2007 mitigations was confirmed as completing competency testing before exiting MLK, and was tested again for competencies at their new facilities, and only employees with competent or better performance evaluations were transferred.

MLK EMPLOYEE MITIGATION

At the time of the MLK hospital closure on August 15, 2007, MLK had 1,602 employees. At the time the mitigation process started in September 2007, 59 of these employees had left County service and 8 had transferred to other County departments. Of the remaining 1,535 employees, 809 were assigned to the MLK Multi-service Ambulatory Care Center (MACC), 26 employees were temporarily assigned to the MLK MACC, and 567 were scheduled for transfer to other DHS facilities as follows:

LAC+USC and Network	173
Harbor-UCLA and Coastal Network	238
Southwest Network	24
Olive View UCLA – ValleyCare	15
High Desert Health System	3
Rancho Los Amigos	87
HSA (including EMS and CHP)	27

At that time, the remaining 115 employees were on leave of absence or on hold pending performance review.

As of May 1, 2008, the number of filled employee positions at MLK MACC is 776. DHS has been working with the Chief Executive Office (CEO) and other departments to implement recommendations on staffing from the Health Management Associates (HMA) consultant reports. The team is planning for a workforce of County employees and non-County [registry] staff of 628 – 638, not including custodial or security. Transfers are scheduled to begin August 1, 2008 to mitigate additional staff to other assignments and align the MLK staffing with HMA recommendations. Registry staff will only be kept where DHS staff with appropriate training or skills are not available. DHS and the CEO will continue to keep you informed on progress in this important effort.

In October 2007, DHS moved 96 long-term leave employees from the MLK MACC budget to the HSA budget. The CEO and DHS have been working to address the return-to-work status of these individuals. The status as of July 1, 2007 is as follows:

Processed:

- 13 - Returned to work
- 13 - Out of Service
- 2 - Medical Release
- 2 - Special Handling

In Process:

- 5 - Medical Releases
- 12 - Job Abandonment
- 10 - Return to work
- 3 - Pending Additional Information

36 - Determined Temporarily/Totally Disabled

The Department will update its information on the 1517 employees who were at MLK-Harbor when it closed, including information about any discipline imposed or pending, the outcome of any appeals, and, for employees transferred, the status of their performance, whether satisfactory or, if not, whether they have been subject to any additional discipline or have received less than competent performance evaluations where they transferred. A summary report based on this updated spreadsheet will be submitted to your Board by the end of the month.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, please let me know.

JFS:rs

c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors